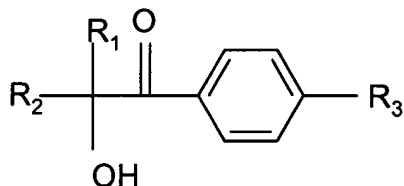


1-11. (cancelled),

12. (currently amended): A method of reducing the residual monomer content in a water soluble or water swellable polymer by subjecting the polymer to ultra violet irradiation in the presence of an ultra violet initiator wherein the water soluble or water swellable polymer is not a gel.

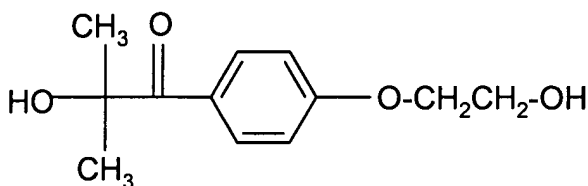
13. (original): A method according to claim 12 in which the polymer is a polymer of acrylamide of intrinsic viscosity above 4 dl/g.

14. (previously presented): A method according to claim 12 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:

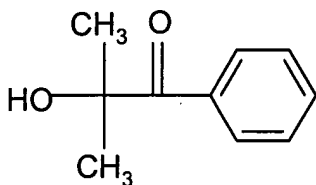


wherein R₁ and R₂ are each independently C₁₋₃ alkyl or together form a C₄₋₈ cycloaliphatic ring, R₃ is H, C₁₋₂ alkyl or -O(CH₂CH₂)_nOH and n is 1-20.

15. (original): A method according to claim 14 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



16. (original); A method according to claim 15 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



17-19. (cancelled).

20. (previously presented): A method according to claim 12 in which the ultraviolet initiator is applied to the surface of the formed polymer and allowed to coat the surface of the polymer and then subjecting the polymer to ultraviolet radiation.

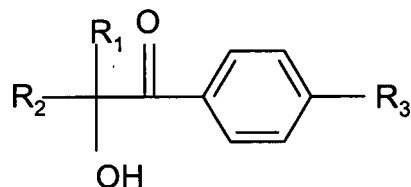
21. (previously presented): A method according to claim 12 in which the ultraviolet initiator is absorbed into the polymer before being subjected to irradiation by ultraviolet light.

22. (new): A method of reducing the residual monomer content in a water soluble or water swellable polymer by subjecting the polymer to ultraviolet irradiation in the presence of an ultraviolet initiator, in which the ultraviolet initiator is applied to the surface of the formed polymer and allowed to coat the surface of the polymer and then subjecting the coated polymer to ultraviolet radiation.

23 (new): A method according to claim 22 in which the ultraviolet initiator is absorbed into the polymer before being subjected to irradiation by ultraviolet light.

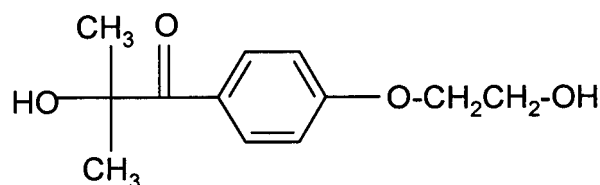
24. (new): A method according to claim 22 in which the polymer is a polymer of acrylamide of intrinsic viscosity above 4 dl/g.

25. (new): A method according to claim 22 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:

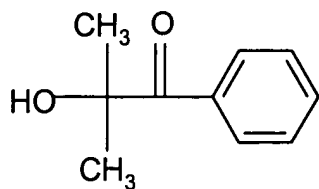


wherein R₁ and R₂ are each independently C₁₋₃ alkyl or together form a C₄₋₈ cycloaliphatic ring, R₃ is H, C₁₋₂ alkyl or -O(CH₂CH₂)_nOH and n is 1-20.

26. (new): A method according to claim 25 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



27. (new); A method according to claim 25 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



28. (new) A method according to claim 12 wherein the polymer subjected to ultraviolet radiation is polymerized by reverse phase polymerization, in which an aqueous solution of monomer is suspended in a water immiscible liquid and polymerized to form polymeric beads; or by emulsifying aqueous monomer into an organic liquid and then effecting emulsion polymerization.